



Iowa Helping Community Policy Group

Governor Kim Reynolds and Lieutenant Governor Adam Gregg

Attorney General Tom Miller, Treasurer of State Michael Fitzgerald, Secretary of State Paul Pate,
Secretary of Agriculture Mike Naig, Auditor of State Rob Sand

U.S. Senators Charles Grassley and Joni Ernst and U.S. Representatives Cindy Axne, Randy Feenstra,
Ashley Hinson, and Mariannette Miller-Meeks

Members of the Iowa General Assembly

Directors of Iowa Department of Human Services, Iowa Department of Management, Iowa Economic
Development Authority, Iowa Workforce Development, Iowa Department of Education, Iowa
Department of Public Health, Iowa Department of Human Rights, Iowa Department of Aging, Iowa
Department of Administrative Services, and Iowa Department of Inspections and Appeals

Dear Iowa Elected and Appointed Officials and Leaders:

The American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 is now law. It provides important support to those working on the
frontline providing care, help and assistance to children, families, seniors, and Iowans in need of care –
in home health care and child care; in community health centers and clinics; in personal care in nursing
homes, hospitals, and group homes; and in home visiting and other community-based health and
human services programs. We seek your active support for these provisions of the Act, regardless of
whether you support the Act as a whole.

Our Iowa Helping Community Policy Group formed with a mission to “to advance federal and state
policies that recognize and support those in the helping fields – paid and unpaid – in their vital roles in
society.” We view the American Rescue Plan Act as critical to addressing the additional challenges
COVID-19 has placed on these workers and to begin to rebuild our helping community infrastructure.

We also support the vision set out in Iowa House Concurrent Resolution 8 and ask your support and
leadership to ensure that Iowa takes full advantage of these funds, starting with establishing a
transparent, accountable, and inclusive process and structure for using them as a foundation for
strengthening this workforce. We ask you to ensure that those on the frontline and those they serve are
represented in the planning and implementation that goes forward.

We are ready and eager to meet and work with you on this task and will be providing more specific
recommendations related to specific roles and opportunities for leadership at both the state and federal
levels.

Sincerely,

Founding steering committee members

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Founding organization members

Common Good Iowa
Easterseals Iowa
Iowa Association for the Education of Young Children
Iowa CareGivers
Iowa Federation of Labor, AFL-CIO
Iowa Mental Health Planning Council
Iowa School Mental Health Alliance
Iowa State Education Association
Mothers on the Frontline
National Association of Social Workers, Iowa Chapter
Please Pass the Love

Attachment: House Concurrent Resolution 8

Note: The Iowa Helping Community Policy Group is a voluntary network of people and organizations with a broad belief in the value of all persons providing help. The Group operates entirely through volunteer efforts by its membership to share its message. Charles Bruner serves as the group's facilitator and can respond to questions about the group and provide information to the group as a whole, and any member of the founding steering committee can be reached for more information.

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 8

Introduced by Brown-Powers

2021 Iowa General Assembly

A concurrent resolution calling upon the President of the United States, the United States Congress, the Governor, the executive branch of Iowa, and the Iowa General Assembly to work to improve communities by bolstering the care workforce.

WHEREAS Iowans value care and caregiving and recognize that the ability to care for one another is the connective tissue of society, forming and strengthening familial and community relationships, and enabling people to participate to their fullest extent in growing the economy; and

WHEREAS, social and economic forces, including the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, have irrevocably changed how our families live, work, and provide care; and

WHEREAS Iowa, with its large senior population and number of families where both parents are in the workforce, has a particular need for a strong care infrastructure to enable all Iowans to live in dignity and contribute to their communities and economy; and

WHEREAS, the needs of people with disabilities have long been overlooked or marginalized in policy solutions, often resulting in the inability to access vital services and supports necessary for maintaining independence and dignity; and

WHEREAS the need for a care workforce, including child care, home and community care, and long term care, will only grow over time and represents a source for jobs in a time where many current jobs are subject to automation; and

WHEREAS the care workforce requires public sector recognition, support, and investment to fulfill its roles but for too long has been taken for granted and seriously under-resourced, under-invested in and under-compensated; and

WHEREAS, investing in the care workforce can be a key community-building strategy in both urban and rural communities for women and people of color, who currently are most likely to serve care workforce roles and are most subject to economic disadvantage and the impacts of COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, the care workforce undergirds our economy and is the work that makes all other work possible; NOW THEREFORE,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that the General Assembly of the state of Iowa calls upon the President of the United States and the United States Congress to place the strengthening of this care workforce as a high priority in response to COVID-19 and as a first step in building this workforce for the 21st century; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the General Assembly of the state of Iowa calls upon the President of the United States and the United States Congress to establish an essential worker bill of rights which gives particular recognition to the ongoing and post-pandemic needs of these essential workers to the economy; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the General Assembly of the state of Iowa calls upon the President of the United States and the United States Congress to enact a 21st century caregiving and education plan which explicitly addresses the need for expanding access to a broad array of long-term services and supports in local settings; ensures access to high-quality, affordable child care; treats professional caregivers and early childhood caregivers with respect and dignity; gives care workforce personnel pay and benefits they deserve; and provides training and career ladders in higher-paying jobs; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Iowa General Assembly calls upon the Governor, and the executive branch to collaborate with the General Assembly to develop a state structure for effective implementation of federal acts

called for in this resolution, and ensure strong oversight, transparency, and accountability, and guarantee the participation and representation of those in the care workforce and the people they serve, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Iowa General Assembly call upon the Governor and the executive branch to collaborate with the General Assembly to ensure this implementation of federal acts called for in this resolution coordinate, and provide information to, Iowa Workforce Development, the Department of Education, the Department of Public Health, the Department of Inspections and Appeals, Department of Human Services, and the Department on Aging, including Future Ready Iowa, in order to ensure access to affordable, quality care and support services for all who need it, including children, older adults, and people with disabilities; expand support services and respite for family caregivers while making professional care more affordable and accessible; and Improve the wages of care workforce jobs for early childhood educators, child care workers and direct care workers, including home care; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that upon passage of this resolution, the Chief Clerk of the House of Representatives shall transmit copies of this resolution to the President of the United States, the President of the United States Senate, the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, and each member of Iowa's congressional delegation.